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The 'Master Spy'

CENSORED testimony of the "master spy," Stig Wennerstroem, now has been made public by the Senate Internal Security Committee. Wennerstroem, a former Swedish air force colonel, was convicted in Stockholm last June and sentenced to a life term.

Since one of his principal victims was the United States, the Senate committee obtained a transcript of essential parts of his testimony.

Wennerstroem spied for the Soviets for 15 years, until the Swedes arrested him in June, 1963. Part of the time he was air attache at the Swedish embassy in Washington.

The main points of his story include assertions that he obtained secret information in the U. S. from both military and industrial sources with ease and that the Soviets maintain an espionage system with a minimum of 150,000 persons. He also claimed to know that the U. S. intelligence force numbers 100,000.

It is possible to question the accuracy of some of Wennerstroem's testimony, but in the main his assertions were detailed and supportable, and appear valid.

The testimony reads like a fictional thriller. But it is not fiction. For all Americans, the conclusions are simple: Our whole defense operation is subject to constant Soviet spying. Our own people, if anything, are too easy to get along with, too lacking in wariness. We relax our security only at our peril. And, lastly, we only hope our own intelligence forces, whatever their number, are as skillful as Wennerstroem seemed to be, even if the Swedes eventually did catch up to him—after the damage was done.

Note: Copies of the Wennerstroem testimony can be obtained for 45 cents from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 20402.

MORI/CDF